MINUTES
Orange Southwest School District (OSSD)
Special Board Meeting on Wednesday November 18, 2026
Randolph Union High School
6pm

Click Here for a video recording of the meeting.

I.I. Opening (6:00 pm) Meeting called to order by Aimil Parmelee, Chair at 6:00 pm

- Board Attendance: *Ensuring a quorum*

Board: Aimil Parmelee, Martha Hafner, Bev Lauchner, Ray Zapata, Anne Kaplan, Rachel Gaidys.
Virtually: Rachel Fish, Ryan Anderson.
Administration: Michael Clark, ORCA, Kyle Southworth.
Public, virtually: Dan Morrison, Avery McGill, Jeanne Collins Deweese.

- Meeting Purpose: Budget Review and Board Education

Aimil Parmelee explains why the agenda features two public comment sections.

- Review and Accept Agenda: *Meeting purpose? Is the right amount of time allotted?*

Agendas for special meetings cannot be modified, agenda is reviewed and accepted.

II. Ownership Linkage (6:05)

- General Public Comment: *The Board welcomes comment but is not able to take any action. Comments limited to 3 minutes per speaker.*

Martha Hafner spoke as a community member about indoctrination in China.

- Updated Budget Timeline (Information)

Michael Clark reviewed the budget timeline. The timeline will continue to be shared each month for reference during the process.

- 2027-2028 Level Service Budget Presentation and Known Education Landscape Variables (Discussion)

Michael Clark explains the difference between a Level Service Budget and a Level Funded Budget and refers to budget numbers on page 3 and the budget explanation in the Superintendent's Report. It is noted that budget work begins in September with administrators getting input from faculty and staff. Most of the Special Education increase is due to out of district placements, but those expenses should be offset by increased reimbursement. Michael Clark reminds that students who meet certain qualifications may count as more than one student in the Long-Term Weighted ADM. Thank you to all the families who completed their household income verification forms – That data currently shows an equivalent increase of 42 students which means the total education cost is divided by an additional 42, even though the district has 17 fewer students enrolled this year. At the moment it looks as though the cost per pupil will be about $15,909, an increase of 2.38% but well below the excess cost threshold. These numbers are all subject to change as factors solidify but shouldn't change drastically. Michael Clark reviews specific items that have increased over last year's budget, naming IT needs and diesel costs.

Aimil Parmelee thanks Crystal Larocque and team for their hard work in updating, researching and submitting accurate data to the state. Conversation begins about the increase to health insurance (2.5%) and how the additional requests (international and world language travel, math interventionist, landscaping) were made. Rachel Gaidys wants to know how the additional services would affect the increase.
Discussion surrounding international travel and world language travel – what's the difference, how many students are involved, how are students whose families aren't able to significantly contribute to the program supported? Aimil Parmelee points out that the communities are incredibly supportive of travel opportunities for students, and Randolph has an enviable program.
Martha Hafner asks what opportunities do the schools have for community volunteers? Ray Zapata comments that Brookfield has a very involved parent club for events and volunteer opportunities.

- Annual Report to Voter (Discussion)

Anne Kaplan provides a review of last year's letter to the voters in the Annual Report and board members make suggestions of things that might be included in this year's letter.

- Potential Summer Projects to be funded with Facilities Reserve Funds (Discussion)

The district has significant surplus funds that could be used to complete projects over the summer across all campuses. Projects include heat pumps, HVAC, modern bathrooms, flooring, lots of paint, school and classroom kitchen upgrades. Another note is that the high school elevator is no longer reliable and will need to be addressed. Bev Lauchner asks if schools are required to have surplus funds, Michael Clark says there is no requirement for schools to have surplus funds, but the OSSD has had the benefit of a very strong business manager in Robin Pembroke. This foresight has resulted in the district having access to funds to respond to emergency situations without having to go to bond vote.
Rachel Gaidys requests a tiered response to the potential use of funds.

- Act 170 Updates and Letters from OSSD Voluntary Merger Study Representative (Information)

Anne Kaplan gives an overview of the first Merger Study meeting. A letter with more details is available on the website. Anne Kaplan noted that many merger study members were clear that they were from school-choice districts and were not interested in changing. Michael Clark explains that school choice is more expensive and works best with very small schools. Discussion of one of the merits of not being a school-choice district is additional students don't impact the budget immediately due to tuition payments which can be upwards of $35,000 per student. Regional schools, diversified offerings driven by a larger student population and professional density impacting academic as well as extracurricular activities were mentioned.

- CESA Update

Michael Clark indicates that Lisa Floyd's report on the October CESA meeting is in the superintendent's report this month.

- *Public Comment specific to 2027-2028 Budget, ACT 170, and CESA*

No public comment.

III. Board Process (7:15)

- Discussion of Board Elections Timeline (Information)

Aimil Parmelee opens the discussion by saying three board terms are expiring in March 2027 – Ryan Anderson (Brookfield), Rachel Gaidys (Braintree) and Aimil Parmelee (Randolph). The deadline for submitting the petition to be on the ballot is no later than 5 pm on the 6th Monday preceding the day of the election. All petitions must be received by 5 pm on Monday January 25, 2027.
The Brookfield position will need a candidate as Ryan Anderson will not run again, the other board members for the Braintree and Randolph seats are not yet decided.

- Sabbatical Committee (one application as of November 9th, due 11/15)

The board agrees to set up a committee to review the sabbatical request. The committee must consist of two teachers, an administrator and a board member,
VOTE: Rachel Gaidys moves to accept Tevye Kelman, Vicki Johnson, Rachel Fish and Michael Clark as members of the committee. Seconded by Martha Hafner. Motion passes unanimously.

- VSBA 40x40 IDEA Campaign (Information)

Anne Kaplan speaks about the VSBA's campaign to request Congress to provide funding as promised for federally required IDEA programs. Michael Clark will collect information re: expenses vs. reimbursements. Anne Kaplan notes a sample resolution is included in the campaign information and considers this consistent with board policy as they will be advocating for public education. More information on this campaign is available in the Superintendent's report.

IV. Board Education (7:30)

- Vermont School Board Association Annual Meeting Report Out (Information)

Anne Kaplan, Aimil Parmelee and Michael attended the two-day annual meeting and found it interesting and informative.

- Policy Governance Review and Debrief of Tuition Request with Jeanne Collins Deweese

Jeanne Collins Deweese provides the board with education on policy.

V. Monitoring the Organization (8:00)

- Second Read of Executive Limitation 2.1, 2.2 as supported by Board Policy 3.4 (Action)

It is noted there is a typo in EL 2.2
VOTE: Anne Kaplan moves to accept EL 2.1 and 2.2 after the typo is corrected. Seconded by Bev Lauchner, motion passes unanimously.

- Financials (Information in support of EL 2.3 Financial Conditions)

VI. Policy Decisions for District Governance (8:10)

- All Policies for first read (Information)
  - B8 -- Electronic Communications Between Employees and Students
  - C10 – Investigation & Response to Harassment, Hazing & Bullying
  - C15 – Student Conduct and Discipline
  - C16 – Student Use of Cell Phones
  - F23 – Capitalization of Assets
- Bus Driver Employment Policy Second Read (Action)

- All Policies for second read, all contain revisions from state (Action)
    - B22 Public Complaints about Personnel
    - C9 Wellness & Comprehensive Health
    - C13 Students Who Are Homeless
    - F3 Fire & Emergency Preparedness Drills

VOTE: Bev Lauchner moves to accept the Bus Driver Employment Policy and Policies B22, C9, C13 and F3 as written. Seconded by Anne Kaplan, motion passes unanimously.

VII. Monitoring the Board (8:20)

- *Board Self-Evaluation: Monitoring compliance with Board Governance Process and Board Management Delegation Policies.*
- GP 4.7 Global Governance Investment - Self Evaluation

Board reviews and discusses.

VIII. Consent Agenda (8:30)

Board motion: I move to approve the Consent Agenda

- Vote on acceptance of Consent Agenda: *Items that the Board has previously delegated to the Superintendent, but that an external authority requires the Board to approve. The entire Consent Agenda is adopted by one motion, without discussion. However, an item can be removed from the Consent Agenda for discussion with a majority vote GP 4.3.4.*
- Approve Minutes from October 14, 2026
- New Hires
- Consent Agenda Request, funds for RTCC

It is noted there are two typos in the October minutes.

VOTE: Anne Kaplan moves to accept the Consent Agenda after the typos are corrected in the minutes. Seconded by Martha Hafner, motion passes unanimously.

IX. Closing/Incidental Information (8:35)

- Superintendent's Report

Michael Clark updates the board regarding further correspondence with Matthew Fedders.

- Item Recap

- Michael Clark will provide requested international and language travel information at December meeting.
- Michael Clark will provide volunteer opportunity information for schools
- Amil Parmelee will work on the letter to voters
- Anne Kaplan, Aimil Parmelee, Michael Clark will collect data/create resolution for the 40x40 Campaign
- Second round of budget information will be prepared for the December meeting

X. Executive Session (If needed)

With no further business, the meeting is adjourned by chair Aimil Parmelee at 8:36 pm.

Future Meetings

- Agenda Planning Meeting Monday November 30th @ 5:30
- Regular Board Meeting: Wednesday December 9th, 2026 6 pm at Braintree Elementary School

Respectfully submitted,

Kyle Southworth

Kyle Southworth
Administrative Assistant, 11/19/2026